

## GETTING STARTED WITH CREATING COMICS AND GRAPHIC NOVELS —SOME TEACHING STRATEGIES

Before creating a comic or graphic novel, students need to be familiar with the components and conventions...encourage discussion, reflection

De-construct - View a variety of comic strips and graphic novels - Note similarities and differences, features, components

Introduce comic/graphic novel terminology – e.g. gutters, speech balloons or word bubbles; word bubble tails; captions (narrative text boxes), etc.;

Explore the types of fonts for titles and sound effects, panel templates used in various graphic novels, - types of speech balloons (dashed-line balloon for whispering, cloud shape for thinking, sharp tails for emphasis, curved tail for normal dialogue, long (extended tail) for far-off dialogue, joined speech balloons...as afterthought or continued speech

Review samples to identify mood and tone of characters based on the conventions used

Review transitions in samples...when and why used; what is overt/implicit; what inferences can be made 'between the frames'?



### Getting Started...

Model for students the pre-planning stage. Perhaps use a 'thinkaloud' to demonstrate the use of an organizer to identify the characters, setting, mood, problem and resolution for a comic that you would like to create.

Use the ideas from the organizer to write a synopsis of the story that outlines the plot and where the characters fit in.

Then have the students do the same.

Next, using a storyboard or page templates from Comic Life, model how to sketch out the story including the dialogue and narration; include rough sketches or symbols for the characters; include dialogue in speech balloons and narration in captions. Use student suggestions as you build the storyboard as to conventions and techniques to use.

Then the students work on their storyboards based on the information in their organizer and synopsis.

Students self edit as well as peer edit and receive teacher input

Students collect their images...these could be photographs, images from the Internet (ensuring copyright rules are upheld); images that are created in a paint program and saved; scanned images, etc.

Students use Comic Life to create their comics.

\*\*\*Remind them to save their work often!



NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

**WRITING—OVERALL EXPECTATIONS:** 1. Generate, gather and organize ideas and information to write for an intended purpose and audience.  
2. Draft and revise their writing using graphic forms and stylistic elements

**MEDIA LITERACY—OVERALL EXPECTATION:** 3. Create a variety of media texts for different purposes and audiences, using appropriate forms, conventions, and techniques  
4. Reflect on and identify their strengths as media interpreters and creators, areas for improvement, and the strategies they found most helpful in understanding and creating media texts.

Knowledge/Skill	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
<b>Knowledge and Understanding</b> Generate and organize ideas; identify conventions and techniques of comics/graphic novels	Demonstrates limited knowledge and understanding of content	Demonstrates considerable some knowledge and understanding of content	Demonstrates considerable knowledge and understanding of content	Demonstrates thorough knowledge and understanding of content
<b>Thinking</b> Use of critical/creative thinking in the writing process—considers types of comic conventions and techniques that are most appropriate for his/her story	Uses critical/creative thinking process with limited effectiveness	Uses critical/creative thinking process with some effectiveness	Uses critical/creative thinking process with considerable effectiveness	Uses critical/creative thinking process with a high degree of effectiveness
<b>Communication</b> Expression and organization of ideas in a graphic text  Use of appropriate conventions and techniques in a graphic text form (comic)	Expresses and organizes ideas with limited effectiveness  Use conventions and techniques of comics with limited effectiveness	Expresses and organizes ideas with considerable some effectiveness  Use conventions and techniques of comics with some effectiveness	Expresses and organizes ideas with considerable effectiveness  Use conventions and techniques of comics with considerable effectiveness	Expresses and organizes ideas with a high degree of effectiveness  Use conventions and techniques of comics with a high degree of effectiveness
<b>Application</b> Publish a comic graphic text  Reflect on strategies that were helpful in creating the comic and ways to improve/enhance subsequent comic writing	Applies knowledge and skills to publish a comic with limited effectiveness  Reflects on current work to inform subsequent comic creations with limited effectiveness	Applies knowledge and skills to publish a comic with some effectiveness  Reflects on current work to inform subsequent comic creations with some effectiveness	Applies knowledge and skills to publish a comic with considerable effectiveness  Reflects on current work to inform subsequent comic creations with considerable effectiveness	Applies knowledge and skills to publish a comic with a high degree of effectiveness  Reflects on current work to inform subsequent comic creations with with a high degree of effectiveness